

SILMAIL 36536

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FROM Q J THOMAS, DUS(L)
14 April 1994
DUSL/MR/47054

MR BROOKER

cc PS/PUS(L&B)*
Mr Bell
Mr Williams
Mr Watkins
HMA Dublin
Mr Daniell
Mr Maccabe
Mrs Brown
Mr Archer RID/FCO
~~Mr Beeton~~
Ms Harrison

* + enc. Mr Brooker's min 13 Apr

**LIAISON GROUP: ANNOTATED AGENDA OF THE TACTICAL OPTIONS FOR
DEPLOYING THE JOINT FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT**

Thank you for your minute fo 13 April with a draft paper which, if Ministers approve, could be deployed in the Liaison Group.

2. I am most grateful to you for producing this. It seems to me on exactly the right lines at this stage. I hope it may not only help the Irish side to focus on these issues, but also to clarify thinking in our own system.

3. I have a few minor suggestions about the paper and these are reflected in the attached note. I hope we can get this forward as soon as possible. I do not myself think we need any discussion but, as you noted in your minute, if others feel it is needed we have an opportunity at stocktaking tomorrow.

4. I should be grateful if you could, as we discussed, prepare a submission to put this forward. It would be good if we could be in a position to deploy this, if it seems sensible to do so, at the Liaison Group meeting on Monday, or at least to leave it with our Irish colleagues at the end of the meeting. But that is clearly not necessary and we can always feed the paper to them through the

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Secretariat after Monday's meeting.

5. As you correctly recall in your minute, I would not want to deploy this paper too soon in case the Irish side happily bail out of a discussion of substance into one of procedure. On the other hand I hope the submission can bring out arguments for deploying it early, rather than late: perhaps quite soon after we do receive a substantive paper from the Irish side. There are two considerations which point in this direction: one defensive and the other positive. First there is some evidence that the Irish side are wary of showing their hand because they continue to lack confidence in the process. It is not just that they are worried about the concept of a process of managed bilaterals, not involving them, in which cherished ideas of theirs might come to be exposed to unfriendly eyes. It is also that they are sceptical of the general prospects, given in particular their assessment of the likely level of British determination in the face of Unionist apathy or hostility. A discussion of the procedural aspects will enable us (I hope) to address those worries. More positively if we can demonstrate that this exercise can feed directly into the "peace process" - and I personally think we may be able to do so - we could anticipate a transformation in Irish attitudes and the level of their commitment and engagement. (Your draft mentions this, and some of my suggested amendments would slightly strengthen the hints in that direction.)

[SIGNED]

Q J THOMAS
14 April 1994
OAB 6447

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SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS

Paragraph 1, after first sentence add: "(It is axiomatic that any evidence of political progress should encourage "peace", even if Sinn Fein do not at once take the steps needed for their inclusion in the process.)"

Option 1 amend opening to read: "Convene, or seek to convene, new collective Talks".

Option 1 amend last line to read: "disclosing the detail of the proposed framework identified, and provisionally agreed, by them."

Paragraph 3 first tirect amend end of first sentence to read: "once the Joint Framework had been drawn up." (We will agree a document with the Irish side that the scheme will only be provisionally agreed).

Paragraph 4 last tirect add after first sentence: "(Questions of format, venue, delegation size etc. would need to be revisited on this, and all other options too.)"

Paragraph 4 last tirect delete the words "including references to the relevance of the Joint Declaration".

Option 2 line 1 after "convene" insert ", or seek to convene,".

Paragraph 5 line 1 after document insert: "(or a variant of it)"

Paragraph 8 add new third tirect: "Potentially make a contribution to the "peace process" by demonstrating the two Governments' purposive commitment to maintaining momentum."

Paragraph 9, penultimate line, delete "with a" and insert "the".

Paragraph 10 second tiret, add at end "or, worse, repudiate completely."

Paragraph 10 third tiret, delete "breach of" and insert "departure from".

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